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# MPUMALANGA CRIME STATS RAISES ALARM OVER MURDER AND SEXUAL OFFENSES

*Serious crime and hijackings decline, yet Nkangala still leads vehicle hijacking cases*

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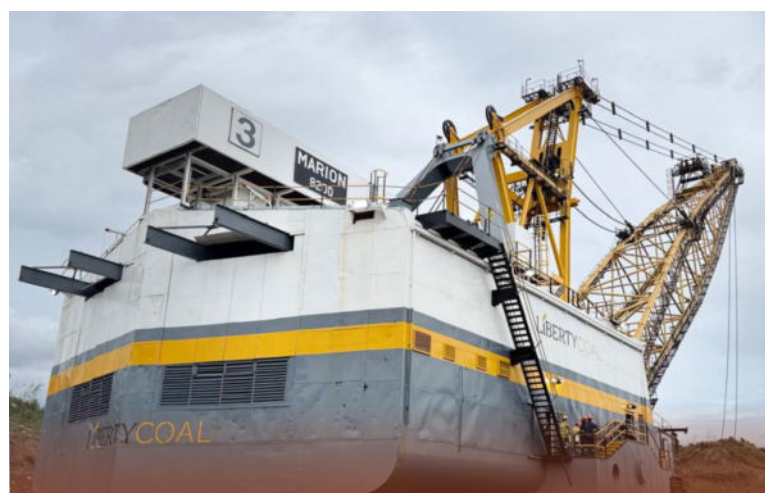
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**DRAGLINE BACK IN OPERATION AS LIBERTY COAL TARGETS 1 MILLION TONS A MONTH AND MORE JOBS**

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# NAFCOC launches Victor Khanye Branch to drive local economic growth

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**DELMAS** — The National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC) has officially launched its Victor Khanye branch and elected its first leadership during a meeting held on Friday, 06 March 2026 in Eloff, Victor Khanye Local Municipality.

The branch aims to promote economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, and local business development by connecting local businesses, government, and stakeholders to foster trade, investment and job creation in the region.

The launch was attended by provincial and regional leaders of NAFCOC, including Mpumalanga Provincial Secretary General Sizwe Dlamini, Provincial Treasurer General Sydney Mamonyane, Nkangala Regional Chairperson Abel Aphane, Nkangala Regional Secretary General Linah Mnguni and Thembeisile Hani branch chairperson Daniel Masombuka.

Nthabiseng Shabangu was elected as the first chairperson of the Victor Khanye branch, supported by Deputy Chairperson Phumzile Kgomo, Secretary General Samuel Zola Sindane, Deputy Secretary Africa Masina and Treasurer Sizwe Kamo Mhlongo.

Speaking to *Highveld Chronicle*, Samuel Zola Sindane said the branch's main purpose is to promote economic empowerment and development while advancing African commerce and entrepreneurship.

"It's important to have a NAFCOC structure in Victor Khanye because the organisation provides a collective voice for businesses, allowing them to share experiences and explore collaborations," he said. "It also provides training, mentorship and helps prepare businesses to access

funding opportunities."

Sindane highlighted that the branch is expected to positively impact the local economy by connecting local businesses, government and other stakeholders, particularly small, medium and emerging enterprises.

He noted challenges faced by local businesses such as limited funding, lack of access to markets and gatekeeping within some business forums.

"As NAFCOC, we plan to maintain cordial relationships with other business formations so that we can work together without misunderstandings," he said.

The branch aims to foster partnerships to drive economic growth and job creation, promote trade, and encourage investment in Delmas and surrounding areas. The branch will focus on supporting small, medium and emerging businesses (SMMEs).

"Our role will be to advocate for policies that support black business and S M E development in order to create a more favourable business environment," he said.

To expand its impact, the branch plans to organise events, workshops and seminars to promote NAFCOC's programmes and encourage more local businesses to join.

Sindane emphasised the importance of strengthening the township economy, particularly as the mining sector declines in parts of the region.

"We believe the township economy is the way to go. People should begin exploring sectors such as the food industry, retail



The newly elected Victor Khanye leadership with regional and provincial leaders

and manufacturing, which have greater potential to grow the local economy," he said.

He warned that continued decline in mining could lead to job losses and fewer business opportunities, making economic diversification essential.

Sindane also highlighted NAFCOC's commitment to good governance, noting that the organisation's constitution provides clear guidelines on discipline, transparency and accountability.

"As a branch, we will organise training sessions on leadership best

practices, governance and ethics to ensure that our leadership operates responsibly," he said.

Looking ahead, Sindane said NAFCOC's long-term vision is to promote black economic empowerment, particularly for youth, women and people living with disabilities.

Regional chairperson Aphane urged members to remain disciplined and work towards strengthening the organisation while initiating projects that will stimulate economic growth in Victor Khanye and the broader region.

## Steve Tshwete Municipality engages community on 2026/27 development priorities

● SIMPHIWE JENNIFER MOTAU

**MIDDELBURG** — The Steve Tshwete Municipality hosted an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Local Economic Development (LED) Representative Forum on 11 March 2026 at the Eric Jiyane Community Hall, bringing together government departments, stakeholders and community members to discuss development priorities for the 2026/27 financial year.

Municipal Manager Mandla Mnguni presented a strategic overview of the municipality, explaining that the IDP serves as a five-year development framework aimed at integrating planning and service delivery across the municipality's 29 wards.

Assistant Director for IDP, Tlami Nkambule, presented the needs identified by communities for the 2026/2027 financial year, focusing on issues raised during public consultations.

The Department of Social Development reported on its fourth-quarter progress for 2025/2026, while the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development highlighted ongoing agricultural initiatives and multi-year development

programmes.

Infrastructure development was also discussed, including the D20 road project linking the R555 to Presidentsrus, presented as part of efforts to improve connectivity and support local economic growth.

Mining company Seriti Mine outlined its Social and Labour Plan for 2026/2027, which includes local economic development initiatives, skills development programmes, corporate social investment projects and updates on community trust projects.

Resident Thabo Mokoena, welcomed the engagement but emphasised the need for faster implementation of projects.

"We appreciate that the municipality is involving the community in planning, but residents want to see these projects being implemented as soon as possible," he said.

Another resident, Nomsa Dlamini, said the forum provided useful information about development programmes in the area. "Meetings like this help us understand what government departments are doing and how communities can benefit from the programmes," she said.



"the path of the righteous winds upwards to flee from hell beneath us" Prov 15:24

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### Understanding Prayer

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

"When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get."

(Matthew 6:5)

Understanding any spiritual discipline begins with a good definition. Put succinctly, prayer is communicating with God. A conversation that can be spoken or silent and even expressed in song. Many of the psalms are prayers set to music. A primary purpose of prayer is connecting with God in order to transfer His will into your life. It's collaborating with God to accomplish His goals.

Prayer is a vital expression of trust in the Lord that emerges from our devotion and commitment. E.M. Bounds put it this way: "When the angel of devotion has gone, the angel of prayer has lost its wings, and it becomes a deformed and loveless thing."

Prayer often involves other disciplines, such as meditation, worship, silence, solitude, and surrender—always surrender.

Effective prayer will have a believer deliberately seeking the mind of God on a particular matter that's on his or her

heart. Whether it's confessing a sin or praising His name or pursuing His will or interceding for a friend or petitioning for our own needs, prayer must be God-centered, never self-centered.

Sincere prayer comes from a heart that longs for God to reveal what He desires. So prayer must also allow adequate time for listening, waiting intently before the Father. God never hides His will. If we seek direction, He delights in providing it.

Since prayer is one of the most powerful of all spiritual disciplines, we shouldn't be surprised that it is among the most misunderstood as well. Christian prayer has some important distinctions from the discipline in other religions, yet it's a temptation for Christians—even those who have known the Lord for years—to make prayer complicated.

To reduce prayer to a cheap marketing scheme insults God's character. He is holy and righteous, and He will always act in your best interests whether you behave correctly or not.

Prayer is not presenting God with a wish list as though He were a genie. Neither is prayer a laborious, painful marathon of monotonous misery entered into for hours each day to prove one's piety to God. It is not the repetition of the same religious words. Remember? Jesus condemned "meaningless repetition." On the contrary, rather than trying to motivate or impress God to gain what we want, prayer is an authentic seeking of His plan as we willingly adjust our will to match His.

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# Mpumalanga crime stats raises alarm over murder and sexual offenses

*Serious crime and hijackings decline, yet Nkangala still leads vehicle hijacking cases*

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MBOMBELA** — Recent crime data for the third quarter of the 2025/26 financial year reveals alarming disparities across Mpumalanga's three districts, particularly in murder and sexual offenses.

From October to December 2025, a total of 285 murders were recorded. The Ehlanzeni district reported 125 killings, the highest, followed by Nkangala with 96 and Gert Sibande recorded 64. These figures were officially released by the MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Jackie Macie, and SAPS Acting Provincial Commissioner Major General (Dr) Zeph Mkhwanazi, in Mbombela on Tuesday, 20 March 2026.

The statistics indicate that Ehlanzeni is disproportionately affected by violent personal crimes, whereas Nkangala faces a greater challenge with vehicle-related offenses. Sexual offenses

remain a serious concern, with Ehlanzeni registering 363 rape cases, Gert Sibande 277, and Nkangala 162, bringing to a total of 802 reported rapes in the quarter.

Carjacking shows a different pattern as Nkangala leads with 114 incidents, more than Ehlanzeni's 76 and far above Gert Sibande 19, suggesting hotspots around Emalahleni and surrounding routes.

Mpumalanga's total community-reported serious crimes fell 9,9 percent year-on-year, dropping from 23 602 cases in the third quarter of 2024/25 to 21 268 in the same period of 2025/26.

- Murder declined 18,6% (350 to 285)
- Rape increased 2,3% (784 to 802)
- Carjackings fell 20,5% (263 to 209)

MEC Macie highlighted that criminal activities, such as homicide, attempted murder, assault, and sexual offenses, are often linked with societal issues like substance abuse and domestic strife. He further emphasised his department's commitment to combating gender-based violence and crimes targeting women and children, supported by the Provincial Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Council and the swift 90-Day Accelerated Plan on GBV.

Furthermore, Macie identified organised crime, often fueled by cross-border activities and illicit mining operations, as a significant challenge. To address this, he stated that efforts are underway to enhance collaboration among law enforcement bodies and the use of technology and intelligence-led policing strategies.



MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Jackie Macie, and SAPS Acting Provincial Commissioner Major General (Dr) Zeph Mkhwanazi

## eMalahleni police seize dagga worth R1 million, arrest suspect after attempted escape

● RODNEY HLTASHWAYO

**EMALAHLENI** — Police seized 46 bags of compressed dagga worth about R1 million after a driver of a gold Toyota Hilux bakkie fled during a late-night patrol along the R544 between eMalahleni and Bethal on Wednesday night, 10 March 2026.

According to a statement from the Office of the Provincial Commissioner of the South African Police Service (SAPS) in Mpumalanga, members attached to eMalahleni SAPS were conducting routine patrols at about 23:00 when they spotted a suspicious Toyota Hilux bakkie loaded with large plastic-wrapped bags.

When police approached the vehicle to investigate, the driver allegedly jumped out of the bakkie and fled the scene on foot before officers could arrest him. Police then searched the vehicle and discovered 46 large bags containing compressed dagga.

The vehicle and the drugs were

confiscated as they were allegedly used in the commission of a crime. The seized dagga has an estimated street value of about R1 million. Police said the vehicle and the drugs form part of an ongoing investigation and that efforts are underway to locate the suspect.

Community forum member Kgaugelo Mashaba said residents remain concerned about the presence of drugs in the area. "We welcome the work done by the police, but the community is still worried about the circulation of drugs and the impact it has on young people,"

she said.

Local resident Jonas Dube said the discovery of such a large quantity of drugs in the area was troubling. "It is worrying to hear that such large quantities of drugs are being transported through our area. We hope the police will catch the person who fled," he said.

Police have appealed to members of the public who may have information related to the case to contact Witbank SAPS on 079 891 5570, call Crime Stop on 08600 10111, or submit information anonymously through the MySAPS App.



Multiple bags loaded with dagga with an estimated street value of R1 million

IMAGE: SUPPLIED



## Liberty Coal distances itself from social media post

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** — Liberty Coal, the owner of Optimum Colliery, has strongly denied allegations circulating on social media claiming the company paid R500,000 to community representatives for protection, describing the claims as false and fabricated.

The company said the message falsely claims Liberty Coal paid money to certain community leaders to manage communities and support the mine.

Part of the social media post reads verbatim: "We gave Nelly as Community representative R500 000 to Manage the communities and everyone had their cut so what's the rush now because all those who led all the wards should have benefited, this community wards leaders if they continue like this we'll have to charge them with Extortion and kick them out we'll run everything online but for now give them high hopes soon all the Mhluzi leaders will be out and we deal with farms, Hendrina, Pulleshop only 20km radius."

The post also refers to representatives from areas such as Mhluzi and Rockdale, claiming they had committed to supporting the mine. The message contains insulting remarks about community leaders, calling some of them "stupid" and suggesting they could be removed if they continued opposing the mine.

Liberty Coal Acting CEO Hlayiseka Chauke said the company strongly rejects the claims and that the message does not represent the organisation.

"The content of the message is completely inconsistent with Liberty

Coal's values, policies and way of operating. We categorically reject any suggestion of improper conduct or dealings with community representatives," Chauke said.

Chauke said the company frequently deals with the spread of misleading information on social media.

"Liberty Coal is inundated on a daily basis with the baseless and unfounded spread of information, often seeking to progress the ulterior agendas of disaffected third parties," he said.

He added that the company would take action against individuals responsible for spreading damaging misinformation.

"Liberty Coal will take action in relation to defamatory and damaging misinformation to protect its rights and reputation to the fullest extent," Chauke said.

The controversy comes amid recent tensions between some community representatives in Mhluzi and Rockdale, following the relaunch of Liberty Coal's stakeholder forum.

The forum had previously been disbanded in December last year before being re-established last month.

Reports indicate that some dissatisfied community members attempted to disrupt the process of establishing the new forum. However, their efforts were unsuccessful as other residents from Mhluzi and Rockdale supported the relaunch.

Chauke said the stakeholder forum was relaunched to ensure broader engagement with the mine's stakeholders.

"These include our host communities, traditional councils, NGOs and other interest groups such as people with disabilities," he said.

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# Mpumalanga approves R216 billion three-year budget

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MBOMBELA** — The Mpumalanga provincial government has approved a R216 billion budget for the 2026 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period, covering the 2026/27 to 2028/29 financial years, with R70,3 billion allocated for the 2026/27 financial year, starting 1 April 2026.

Finance MEC Bonakele Majuba presented the budget at the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in Mbombela on Wednesday, 11 March 2026.

Majuba said 79,6%, amounting to about R56 billion, will be raised from the provincial equitable share, while 15,2%, translating to about R10,7 billion will be funded through conditional grants from the national government. The remaining R3,7 billion will come from the provincial own revenue, including car licence renewals, gambling levies and liquor taxes.

The province's own revenue increased from R2,4 billion in 2025/26, while the share of national revenue (equitable-share) rose slightly from 8,2% in 2025/26 to 8,4% in 2026/27.

Majuba said this increase is partly due to population growth in the province.

Mpumalanga's economy is projected to grow by 1,3% in 2026, rising to 1,9% in 2027, and reaching 3% by 2029, according to Majuba. Growth is expected to be driven primarily by agriculture, finance, transport and communication and construction sectors.

He added that the financial sector has shown resilience, achieving about 2% growth annually, with an average annual growth projected at 3,2% for 2024-2029.

Majuba also announced a voluntary early retirement programme aimed at reducing payroll costs while allowing departments to bring in new employees. Eight provincial departments will receive R84,3 million

to implement the programme. An additional R250 million has been allocated for disaster relief. The Education Department will receive the largest share at R30,6 billion, followed by Health with R21,1 billion, and Public Works, Roads and Transport with R6,5 billion. Other departmental allocations include:

- Office of the Premier – R505,9 million
- Provincial Legislature – R585,4 million
- Provincial Treasury – R729,1 million

- Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) – R2,37 billion
- Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs – R1,82 billion
- Economic Development and Tourism – R1,40 billion
- Community Safety, Security and Liaison – R2,35 billion
- Culture, Sport and Recreation – R721 million
- Social Development – R2,25 billion



The Mpumalanga Finance MEC Bonakele Majuba unveiled R216 billion budget for a three-year spending plan (2026/27 – 2028/29), with R70,3 billion allocated for the 2026/27 fiscal year  
IMAGE: Facebook - Mpumalanga Treasury

## Infrastructure Renovations at Early Childhood Development Centres in VKLM Request for Quotations

Local suppliers within the Victor Khanye Local Municipality (VKLM) are invited to submit quotes for infrastructure renovations at Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres within the municipality. This initiative aims to improve the learning environment and safety of young children by upgrading essential infrastructure at selected ECD facilities in the community.

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### SCOPE OF WORK

- Installation & painting of the ceilings in all rooms & classrooms.
- Installation of floor tiles in the ECD.
- Fixing & plastering of cracked walls & floors inside and outside the buildings.
- Painting all the walls inside & outside
- Painting of the boundary wall inside and outside.
- Build toilets with 3 cubicles for girls & 2 for boys with 2 urinals.
- Building of additional classroom/kitchen/storage/office-sickbay/s.
- Install fencing & lockable gates.
- Fixing of windows & replacement of cracked glass & windowpanes.

### IMPORTANT:

- We do not pay anyone for sending us quotations.
- We follow company procurement procedures of getting 3 quotes from different suppliers.
- Labour is paid separately, please quote it separately and as per the scope of work.
- Labour quotes must be accompanied by material quotation from the store (we do not take material quotes that is written on a contractor's letter head).
- The contractor supplies the three quotes, and we purchase direct from the supplier/store.

### LABOUR QUOTES

Quotations for labour must be separate according to each line of work:

- Installation of floor tiles in all the rooms.
- Installation of ceilings, including painting.
- Plastering of walls and boundary walls.
- Installation of fence and gates.
- Plumbing.
- Building of classroom/kitchen/storage/office-sickbay.

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# Dragline back in operation as Liberty Coal targets 1 million tons a month and more jobs

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** — Liberty Coal has recommissioned its Marion 8200 dragline at Optimum Colliery after years of neglect and vandalism. The dragline, now back in operation after a refurbishment costing R500 000, is expected to boost surface mining operations and help the colliery reach its goal of one million tons of coal per month.

Acting CEO Hlayiseka Chauke said the refurbishment marks a key operational milestone.

“The increase in production rates will directly translate into the creation of more jobs at the mine,” he said. “Our goal is to mine efficiently to ensure the business is sustainable and the jobs created at the mine are also sustainable. The refurbishment of the dragline demonstrates Liberty Coal’s

commitment to investment into the mine and investing into the future.”

The dragline, which has a boom just over 100 metres long and can excavate coal to nearly 80 metres depth, had been out of service since 2018 when the mine was under business rescue.

The refurbishment included a new operator’s cab, integrated offsite camera systems, as well as advanced performance and engine monitoring technology.

Structural integrity assessments and non-destructive testing (NDT) were conducted on all major load-bearing components, and the bucket system, rigging, and fairlead assemblies were refurbished to ensure optimal performance.

Chief Operating Officer Peter Nordin highlighted the collaboration involved in the project. “The refurbishment programme was executed through collaboration between Liberty Coal’s in-house engineering and maintenance teams and specialist contractors with expertise in large-scale mining equipment. All work was completed under strict safety and quality assurance procedures,” he said. “Returning this asset to service strengthens our stripping capacity and supports long-term production objectives.”

Liberty Coal said the dragline recommissioning followed all engineering standards and mine safety protocols, including functional testing of the hoist, drag, and swing systems before returning it to service.



Liberty Coal team celebrates the milestone. From left to right: Head of Communications Mpumelelo Mashifane; GM Technical Emmanuel Gwata; General Manager Mike Elliot; Business Development Sihle Ntuli; CEO Liberty Mining Christiaan Joubert; CFO Liberty Coal Delmaine Spies; Director: Capital Projects Ulrich Bester; CEO Liberty Coal Hlayiseka Chauke; COO Liberty Coal Peter Nordin  
IMAGE: Supplied



Optimum Colliery’s dragline, Marion 8200, has been given a new lease of life after a successful refurbishment programme costing R500 000  
IMAGE: Supplied



## eMalahleni FM donates school jackets and shoes to learners while celebrating 16 years on air

**EMALAHLENI** - Community radio station Emalahleni FM carried out a goodwill initiative on Friday, 13 March 2026, by donating school jackets and shoes to several schools across Emalahleni.

The main aim of the programme was to help learners stay warm as the winter season approaches. The initiative forms part of the station’s community outreach efforts and coincides with its celebration of 16 years of broadcasting.

During the campaign, the station visited a number of schools including Mogalitwa Primary School, Coronation Secondary School, Johannesburg Secondary School, Maloma Primary School, and Phakama Secondary School.

Teachers and principals from the visited schools expressed their heartfelt gratitude, noting that many learners had been attending school without proper footwear or warm clothing. They said the donations will make a significant difference, ensuring that learners are properly dressed and better prepared for the cold weather.

As part of the same outreach programme, the radio station also extended its support to FOUNDATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME, an organisation that assists victims affected by criminal activities in the area. The station donated

groceries to support the organisation’s work in the community.

Speaking on behalf of the organisation, spokesperson Nothando Gina welcomed the gesture, saying the donation will greatly benefit community

members who rely on the organisation for assistance.

The initiative highlights Emalahleni FM’s ongoing commitment to uplifting local communities, particularly vulnerable learners and residents in need.



# ISIKO LETHU

# Our Story

WITH SIPHO MAHAMBA

## Ukuthuthukisa izinga lezefundo esifundeni seMpumalanga

Njengombana silwela ukwenza ngcono imiphumela yefundo esifundeni seMpumalanga, into eyodwa eqakathekileko evela njengesitjhijilo esikhulu, kungazibandakanyi kwababelethi eemfundweni zabentwa babo. Lokhu kufakazelwa miphumela ekhiqizwa ziinkolo zesifundeni seMpumalanga. Ukungazibandakanyi kwababelethi kunomthelela ongasimuhle kukodwa.

Abafundi abanganalo isekelo lababelethi bavame ukutshwenyeka khulu ngeenkolweni. Imiphumela yabo ayibi mihle kanye nokuziphatha kwabo akubi kuhle. Lokhu kuthinta nabanye abafundi abasebenza ngokuzimisela kanye nalabo abaziphatha kuhle. Okubuhlungu khulu kukobana abotijhere nanoma benza imizamo yokobana bababonise iindlela elungileko, akubilula, sekufana nokuthela amanzi emhlana wedada.

Kodwana lokha umntwana nakanesekelo lombelethi, nanoma enza into ethileko, kubalula bona umntwana lo aboniseke indlela elungileko. Kanti nalokha umntwana nakanesitjhijilo esithileko esiphathelene nokufunda, kubalula bona utijhere alinge eminye imizamo yokurhelebha umntwana loyo njengokufaka umntwana loyo amatlasi angezelelweko ngemvumo yombelethi. Kanti nanoma umntwana loyo afika ekhabo kubalula bona akhuthale aragele phambili ngokufunda ngesekelo lombelethi.

Kufanele bona amahlango karhulumente asebenzisane ukwenza amathuba wokukhuthaza ukuzibandakanya kwababelethi, ukusuka ekuzinikeleni ematlasini ukuya emihlanganweni yababelethi kanye nabotijhere.

Ukuzibandakanya kwababelethi

akusikho ukunethezeka, kodwana kusidingo. Ngokubeka phambili into eqakathekileko le, singavula amandla woke wabafundi besifunda saseMpumalanga begodu sakhe ikusasa elihle lesifunda sethu. Kanti-ke nekusasa leSewula Afrika lisezandleni abafundi.

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**NOTICE OF APPLICATION IN TERMS OF SECTION 98 (1) OF VICTOR KHANYE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY SPATIAL PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT BY-LAW OF 2015 READ TOGETHER WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SPATIAL PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT ACT 2013 (ACT 16 OF 2013), and read with Section 56 of the Town Planning and Township Ordinance, 1986 (Ordinance 15 of 1986).**

We, KAYC MOLENKA (PTY) LTD (Reg No. 2020/800838/07), being the authorised agent of the owner of Erf 313, Eloff, hereby give notice in terms of Section 98 (1) of Victor Khanye Local Municipality By-Law on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management of 2015, read with Section 56 of the Town Planning and Township Ordinance, 1986 (Ordinance 15 of 1986), that we have applied to the Victor Khanye Local Municipality for the amendment of Victor Khanye Land Use Scheme, 2020, by rezoning and formalising existing land uses of Erf 313, Eloff, from 'Residential 1' to 'Residential 2' for the purposes of group housing/flats. Particulars of the application will lie for inspection during office hours at the Corner Van Der Walt Street and Samuel Road

Delmas, for a period of 30 days from 06 March 2026.

Objections to or representations in respect of the application must be lodged with or in writing to the Municipal Manager, Victor Khanye Local Municipality at the above address or posted to P.O. Box 6, Delmas, 2210, within a period of 30 days from 06 March 2026. Any person who cannot write may during office hours visit Victor Khanye Local Municipality (Town Planning Unit: 087-288-0729) for assistance with transcribing their comments, objection or representations.

Address of the Agent: KAYC MOLENKA (PTY) LTD, P.O Box 765 Tlhabane, 0300 (Cell: 083 735 9327), mbulelodala@gmail.com)

**KENNISGEWING VAN AANSOEK INGEVOLGE ARTIKEL 98 (1) VAN DIE VICTOR KHANYE PLAASLIKE MUNISIPALITEIT RUIMTELIKE BEPLANNING EN GRONDGEBRUIKSBESTUURSVERORDENING VAN 2015 SAAMGELEES MET DIE BEPALINGS VAN DIE RUIMTELIKE BEPLANNING EN GRONDGEBRUIKSBESTUURSWET 2013 (WET 16 VAN 2013), en saamgelees met Artikel 56 van die Stadsbeplanning- en Dorpsordonnansie, 1986 (Ordonnansie 15 van 1986).**

Ons, KAYC MOLENKA (EDMS) BPK (Reg. Nr. 2020/800838/07), as die gemagtigde agent van die eienaar van Erf 313, Eloff, gee hiermee kennis ingevolge Artikel 98 (1) van die Victor Khanye Plaaslike Munisipaliteit se Verordening oor Ruimtelike Beplanning en Grondgebruiksbestuur van 2015, gelees met Artikel 56 van die Dorpsbeplanning- en Dorpsordonnansie, 1986 (Ordonnansie 15 van 1986), dat ons by die Victor Khanye Plaaslike Munisipaliteit aansoek gedoen het vir die wysiging van die Victor Khanye Grondgebruikskema, 2020, deur die hersoening en formalisering van bestaande grondgebruik van Erf 313, Eloff, van 'Residensieel 1' na 'Residensieel 2' vir die doeleindes van groepbehuising/woonstelle. Besonderhede van die aansoek lê ter insae gedurende kantoorure op die hoek van Van Der Waltstraat en Samuelweg, Delmas, vir 'n tydperk van 30 dae vanaf 6 Maart 2026.

Besware teen of vertoë met betrekking tot die aansoek moet skriftelik by of tot die Munisipale Bestuurder, Victor Khanye Plaaslike Munisipaliteit, by die bogenoemde adres ingedien word, of gepos word aan Posbus 6, Delmas, 2210, binne 'n tydperk van 30 dae vanaf 6 Maart 2026. Enige persoon wat nie kan skryf nie, kan gedurende kantoorure die Victor Khanye Plaaslike Munisipaliteit (Stadsbeplanningseenheid: 087-288-0729) besoek vir hulp met die transkribering van hul kommentaar, besware of vertoë.

Adres van die Agent: KAYC MOLENKA (EDMS) BPK, Posbus 765 Tlhabane, 0300 (Selfoon: 083 735 9327), mbulelodala@gmail.com)

## PUBLIC NOTICE & INVITATION TO PUBLIC MEETING; WATER USE LICENCE APPLICATION – NKANGALA, MPUMALANGA

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 41(4) of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) that a Water Use Licence Application (WULA) has been submitted to the Department of Water and Sanitation.

**Applicant:** Itshudu Agricultural Primary Cooperative Ltd; Project: Portion 17 of Syferfotein Farm 288 IR, Delmas 2210. DWS Reference Number: [If available]

### Proposed Water Uses

The application seeks authorisation for water uses in terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act, including: The applicant intends to abstract groundwater from an existing borehole for industrial purposes, namely the treatment and bottling of portable water for commercial supply. The abstracted water will be treated to comply with SANS 241 drinking water standards and packaged for distribution. Water will be stored in off-stream storage tanks prior to use. Wastewater generated from treatment processes, equipment wash-down and general cleaning will be contained and managed on site through appropriate storage and disposal systems, with no direct discharge to a watercourse. The proposed abstraction volume is modest and will be managed in accordance with sustainable yield assessments to ensure no adverse impact on the aquifer or nearby surface water resources.

### Public Participation

Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are invited to register and submit written comments, questions, or concerns regarding the application.

### Invitation to Public Meeting

Members of the public and stakeholders are invited to attend a public participation meeting where the project and water use licence process will be presented.

**Meeting Details:** Date: 30 March 2026 Time: 9:00 am; Venue: Syferfontein Farm Delmas Document Availability application documents will be available for review at Delmas library also available on request via email

**Comment Period:** The public comment period is 60 days from the date of this notice.

**Closing date for comments:** 11 May 2026 at 18:00.

Submit Comments / Register as I&AP

Itshudu Agricultural Primary Cooperative Ltd

Contact Person: Fani Kabini; Tel: 079 720 8202; Email: kabinifj@gmail.com

Your participation is important to ensure that all potential impacts on water resources are considered.

## OPENBARE KENNISGEWING & UITNODIGING TOT OPENBARE VERGADERING; AANSOEK OM WATERGEBRUIKSLISENSIE – NKANGALA, MPUMALANGA

Kennis geskied hiermee ingevolge Artikel 41(4) van die **Nasionale Waterwet (Wet 36 van 1998)** dat 'n Aansoek om 'n Watergebruikslisensie (Water Use Licence Application – WULA) by die Departement van Water en Sanitasie ingedien is.

**Aansoeker:** Itshudu Agricultural Primary Cooperative Ltd

**Projek:** Gedeelte 17 van die Plaas Syferfotein 288 IR, Delmas 2210

**DWS Verwysingsnommer:** [Indien beskikbaar]

**Voorgestelde Watergebruik:** Die aansoek versoek magtiging vir watergebruik ingevolge Artikel 21 van die **Nasionale Waterwet**, insluitend die volgende:

Die aansoeker beoog om grondwater vanaf 'n bestaande boorgat te onttrek vir industriële doeleindes, naamlik die behandeling en botteling van drinkbare water vir kommersiële voorsiening. Die onttrekte water sal behandel word om aan die SANS 241 drinkwaterstandaarde te voldoen en sal verpak word vir verspreiding.

Water sal voor gebruik in opgaardamme of opgaartenks buite waterlope gestoor word. Afvalwater wat voortspruit uit behandelingsprosesse, die was van toerusting en algemene skoonmaak sal op die terrein opgevang en bestuur word deur toepaslike bergings- en wegdoenstelsels, sonder enige direkte vrystelling na 'n waterloop.

Die voorgestelde onttrekkingsvolume is beperk en sal bestuur word ooreenkomstig volhoubare opbrengsbeoordelings om te verseker dat daar geen nadelige impak op die akwifer of nabygeleë oppervlakwaterbronne is nie.

**Openbare Deelname:** Belangstellende en Geaffekteerde Partye (I&AP's) word uitgenooi om te registreer en skriftelike kommentaar, vrae of bekommernisse rakende die aansoek in te dien.

**Uitnodiging tot Openbare Vergadering:** Lede van die publiek en belanghebbendes word uitgenooi om 'n openbare deelnamevergadering by te woon waar die projek en die watergebruikslisensieproses voorgelê sal word.

**Vergaderingsbesonderhede:** Datum: 30 Maart 2026 Tyd: 09:00 Plek: Syferfontein Farm Delmas

**Beskikbaarheid van Dokumente:** Aansoekdokumente sal beskikbaar wees vir besigtiging by Delmas Biblioteek ook beskikbaar op versoek per e-pos.

**Kommentaartydperk:** Die openbare kommentaartydperk is 60 dae vanaf die datum van hierdie kennisgewing.

**Sluitingsdatum vir kommentaar:** 11 May 2026 om 18:00 pm.

**Dien Kommentaar In / Registreer as I&AP**

Itshudu Agricultural Primary Cooperative Ltd

**Kontakpersoon:** Fani Kabini

**Tel:** 079 720 8202 | **E-pos:** kabinifj@gmail.com

U deelname is belangrik om te verseker dat alle moontlike impakte op waterbronne behoorlik oorweeg word.

# Steve Tshwete appoints EFF councillor Joana Mthombeni as Public Safety MMC

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** - Joana Mthombeni from the EFF has been appointed Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Public Safety in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality following political consultations between the EFF and the ANC. Mthombeni received her appointment from executive mayor Mhlonishwa Masilela on Friday, 13 March 2026. Speaking to *Highveld Chronicle* shortly after her appointment, Mthombeni said her priority is to tackle crime in the municipality through collaboration with different sectors and community members. "We are entering a new era with fresh governance, innovative strategies, effective planning, and dedicated implementation. Together with the community, we are committed to transforming the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality into a safer place to live," she said. She added that enforcing municipal by-laws will form part of efforts to improve safety. Her appointment follows a

directive from the ANC in Mpumalanga to its regional leadership, instructing mayor Masilela to appoint an EFF councillor to the position after discussions between ANC and EFF leaders on Monday, 9 March 2026. The position became vacant after EFF Chief Whip Joseph Ngubeni was elected speaker of council, replacing Thato Mathunyane from the Middelburg and Hendrina Residents Front (MHRF), following a successful motion of no confidence on 10 February 2026. Two days later, mayor Masilela appointed ANC councillor Ernest Nkwana to the MMC position. However, the decision was reversed after objections from the EFF. According to ANC Nkangala regional secretary Sello Matshoga, the initial appointment was made before consultations between the ANC

and EFF had been concluded. "We understand that appointing MMCs is the prerogative of the mayor but we decided to halt that decision because it was made before consultative talks were concluded between ourselves and the EFF," said Matshoga. Following the 2021 local government elections, the EFF entered into a cooperation agreement with the ANC in Mpumalanga to jointly govern several hung municipalities, including Lekwa, Goven Mbeki and Steve Tshwete. Matshoga said the appointment of an EFF councillor to the position forms part of that political arrangement. "We embrace this appointment as part of our commitment to collaborate with the EFF. We want to extend our best wishes to mom Mthombeni, hoping she excels in her new role," he said.



Steve Tshwete Executive Mayor Mhlonishwa Masilela with newly appointed Public Safety MMC Joana Mthombeni IMAGE: Supplied



## Mpumalanga invests R15 million in property sector to unlock 200 jobs opportunities

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MPUMALANGA** — The Mpumalanga provincial government plans to create 200 job opportunities by investing in the real estate sector. Finance MEC Bonakele Majuba announced during the provincial budget speech on Wednesday, 11 March 2026, that R15 million will be allocated in the Public Works, Roads and Transport department to equip youth with industry relevant knowledge and practical competencies within the property sector training in partnership with the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority and Services SETA. The allocation follows an announcement by Premier Mandla Ndlovu during the State of the Province Address (SoPA) on Thursday, 05 March 2026, that investing in the sector will also alleviate youth unemployment in the province. He said the government will be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority and Services SETA to implement the programme. The initiative will equip participants with industry-relevant knowledge, practical competencies, and placement opportunities within the property sector. "200 job opportunities will be created in the first cohort to be recruited at the beginning of the 2026/27 financial year," he said. The property sector in Mpumalanga, much like other regions in South Africa, continues to grapple with substantial transformation challenges. Despite ongoing initiatives to advance Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE), progress

remains slow, with many black individuals finding it difficult to gain access to and reap benefits from commercial real estate opportunities. Key obstacles such as restricted funding access, unequal ownership distribution, and complicated regulatory requirements are seen as major barriers to the industry's transformation. Many black property investors face liquidity challenges that prevent them from effectively managing increasing costs and interest rates. Furthermore, their representation in the property market is still quite limited, and navigating B-BBEE compliance can prove to be an overwhelming task for small, micro, and medium enterprises (SMMEs). "The property sector is one of the largest and most powerful economic engines in the country, yet, despite its scale and resilience, the sector has remained largely untransformed and inaccessible to previously disadvantaged individuals," Ndlovu said. He added that the programme aims to address unemployment, promote entrepreneurship, and increase participation in the real estate industry. "We want to thank the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority leadership and the Minister of Human Settlements for partnering with Mpumalanga Province in this programme," he said.

### SECTION 36 PERMIT APPLICATION NOTICE

Exxaro Belfast Coal (Pty) Ltd (hereafter Exxaro) operates the Belfast Coal Mine located in the Mpumalanga Province. During ongoing mining activities within the approved mining footprint on Portion 11 of the Farm Zoekop 1222 JS, two graves were identified in an area planned for mining expansion. In order to prevent unintended disturbance and to ensure lawful and respectful management of the graves, Exxaro intends to undertake a Grave Relocation Process (GRP). Based on headstone inscriptions, the graves are older than 60 years and are therefore protected in terms of Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA). As such, both graves are being treated as protected graves for this process. The proposed GRP will be undertaken in compliance with the:

- The National Health Act, 61 of 2003.
- National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999).
- The Mpumalanga Crematoria and Exhumations of Bodies Act, (Act No. 8 of 2005)
- Applicable municipal by-laws relevant to exhumations and reburials.

The purpose of this site notice is to identify and consult with the interested and/or affected persons with regard to this application. If you are an interested and/or affected persons please use the contact below to obtain further information, using the Digby Wells project reference number: EXX10199.

IF YOU HAVE RELEVANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS PROCESS, PLEASE CONTACT: Digby Wells Environmental, Floyd Babani and Tshilidzi Tsotetsi, Private Bag X10046, Randburg, 2125, Tel: (011) 789 9495, Email: sh@digbywells.com

**COMMENTING PERIOD FOR NHRA S. 36 PERMIT APPLICATION**  
 Start of public commenting period: 13 March 2026 End of public commenting period: 16 May 2026

### ISAZISO SESICELO SEMVUME NGAPHANSI KWOHLUKO 36

I-Exxaro Belfast Coal (Pty) Ltd (ngemuva kwalokhu i-Exxaro) isebenzisa Imayini Yamalahle yaseBelfast etholakala esiFundazweni saseMpumalanga. Ngesikhathi kuqhubeka imisebenzi yezimayini ngaphakathi kwendawo evunyiwe yezimayini kuNgxenywe 11 yePulazi iZoekop 1222 JS, amathuna amabili akhunjwe endaweni. Okuhlelwe ukunwetshwa kwezimayini. Ukuze kugwenywe ukuphazamiseka okungahlosiwe kanye nokuqinisekisa ukuphathwa kwamathuna ngokusemthethweni nangenhlonipho, I-Exxaro ihlose ukwenza i-Grave Relocation Process (GRP). Ngokusekelwe emibhalweni yamatshe amakhulu, amathuna amadala kuneminyaka engama-60 futhi ngakho-ke avikelekile ngokweSigaba 36 soMthetho Wezinsiza Zamagugu Kazwelonke (uMthetho No. 25 ka-1999) (NHRA). Kanjalo, womabili amathuna athathwa njengamathuna avikelekile kule nqubo. I-GRP ehlongozwayo izokwenziwa ngokuhambisana nalokhu:

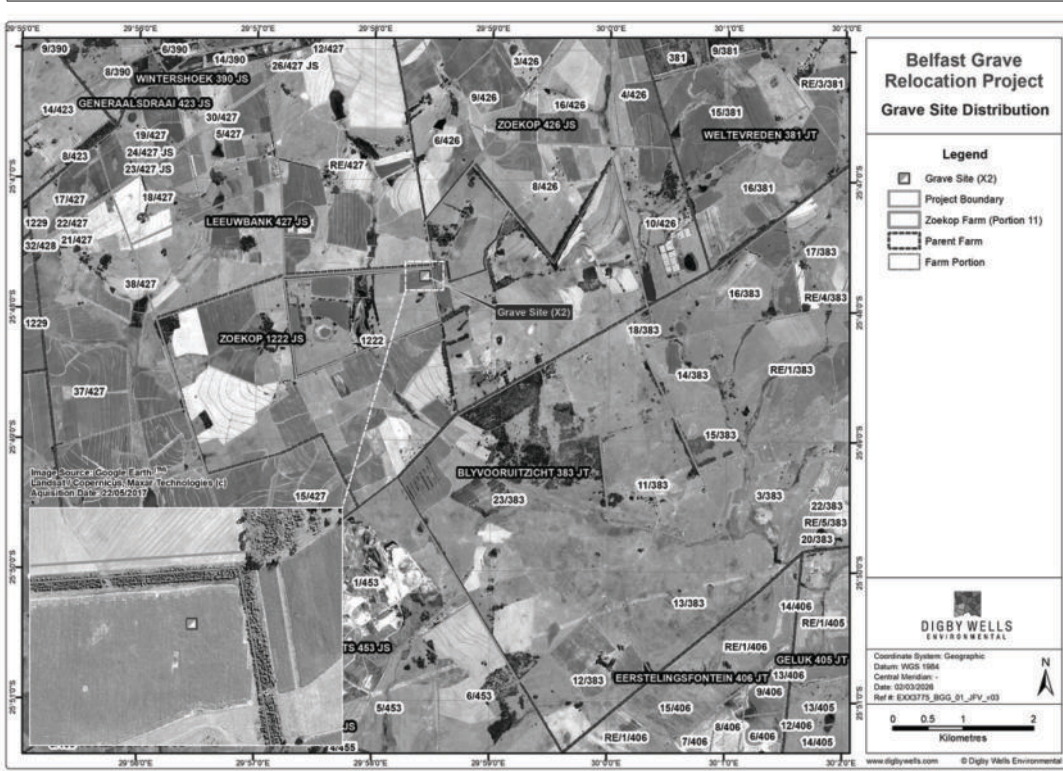
- Umthetho Wezempilo Kazwelonke, 61 ka-2003.
- Umthetho Wezinsiza Zamagugu Kazwelonke (uMthetho No. 25 ka-1999).
- Umthetho Wokushiswa Kwezidumbu WaseMpumalanga kanye Nokumbiwa Kwezidumbu, (uMthetho No. 8 ka-2005)
- Imithetho kamasipala esebenzayo ephathelene nokumbiwa kwezidumbu nokungcwatshwa kabusha.

Inhloso yalesi saziso sesiza ukuhlonza kanye nokuxoxisana nabantu abanentshisekelo kanye/noma abathintekayo mayelana nalezi sicelo. Uma ukhona abanentshisekelo kanye/noma abantu abathintekile sicela usebenzise othintana nabo ngezansi ukuze uthole ulwazi olwengeziwe, usebenzisa ireferensi yeprojekthi ye-Digby Wells Inombolo yomthetho: EXX10199.

UMA UNOLWAZI OLUBALULEKILE MAYELANA NALENQUBO, SICELA UXHUMANE NO: Digby Wells Environmental, Floyd Babani and Tshilidzi Tsotetsi, Private Bag X10046, Randburg, 2125, Tel: (011) 789 9495, Email: sh@digbywells.com

**COMMENTING PERIOD FOR NHRA S. 36 PERMIT APPLICATION**  
 Ukuqala kwesikhathi sokuphawula komphakathi: 13 uNdaso 2026  
 Ukuphela kwesikhathi sokuphawula komphakathi: 16 uNhlabo 2026

### LOCATION OF AFFECTED GRAVES - INDAWO YAMATHUNA ATHINTEKAYO





### Delmas superfan "Dube 22" in running for Mpumalanga Sport Awards

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**DELMAS** — Football supporter Xolani "Dube 22" Innocent Sibiyi has been named a finalist in the Sport Fan of the Year category on 07 March 2026 for the Mpumalanga Sport Awards, recognising his dedication and influence within the football fraternity. "I was born a Buccaneer. My blood is red, my bones are white and my skin is black," said Sibiyi, describing his lifelong support for Orlando Pirates. Sibiyi said being nominated as a finalist is already an honour. "It shows that federations, clubs and associations see the dedication, commitment and passion I have for the game. Being a finalist means you are among the best supporters," he said. Sibiyi is widely recognised by supporters for his orange jersey printed "Dube 22". He said his journey as a fan started at a young age, when people in his community called him by his surname, Dube. "I grew up with people calling me by my surname, so whenever I printed a

jersey I made sure it had 'Dube' on it," he explained. The number 22 on the jersey carries special meaning. Sibiyi said it was inspired by former Lesley Manyathela, whose legacy left a lasting impression on him while growing up. His love for Orlando Pirates was also influenced by his father, a devoted supporter who often took him to stadium matches when he was young. As he grew older, another player who inspired him was former Orlando Pirates winger Thulasizwe Mbuyane, especially during the club's historic 2010/11 and 2011/12 seasons when the team achieved the double treble. For Sibiyi, match days are a special ritual. Before heading to the stadium he prepares his famous placard with the words 'Happy People Again' and wears his signature orange 'Dube 22' jersey.

"That jersey is very special to me. It has become my signature jersey and has gained me recognition in the football fraternity. But my biggest trademark is the smile on my face," he said. He believes supporters play a crucial role in football, often referred to as the '12th man' by motivating players and creating an atmosphere that can influence the outcome of matches. "When supporters show up in numbers and chant together, it gives confidence to the players and makes the opposition respect the team," he added. Beyond supporting his team, Sibiyi also contributes to football development in his community. Every December he forms part of the management team that hosts the 2210 Mayoral Festive Football Challenge, where scouts are invited to identify young players. He also uses social media to promote aspiring players from local communities and connect them with people involved in football development. Looking ahead, Sibiyi plans to use his platforms to promote local sports content, share information about trials and development programmes, and encourage greater participation in sport. Sibiyi said community support means everything to him. "Being a fan is more than just watching the game. It's about passion, loyalty and standing behind what you love through every moment. Let's do this together," he said.

*Sports fanatics and the community at large can vote for Sibiyi in the 'Sport Fan of the Year' category at the Mpumalanga Sport Awards by sending an SMS: MPSA02 to 33233. Voting costs R1.50 per SMS. Voting lines close at midnight on 20 March 2026.*

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**XOLANI "DUBE 22" INNOCENT SIBIYA**

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